

Motivational profiles and performance in young elite football players: A person-oriented approach

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Introduction

The influence of motivational variables on athletic performance is undisputed. What is unclear, though, is how the motivational system must be constituted in order to promote performance as much as possible. In terms of motivational psychology, this raises the question how the motivational constructs Self-Determination, Hope for Success (HS), Fear of Failure (FF) and Achievement Orientation interact with each other (Conroy et al, 2007) This holistic approach leads to a person-oriented methodology that studies how patterns of such variables affect the development of performance (Bergman et al., 2003).



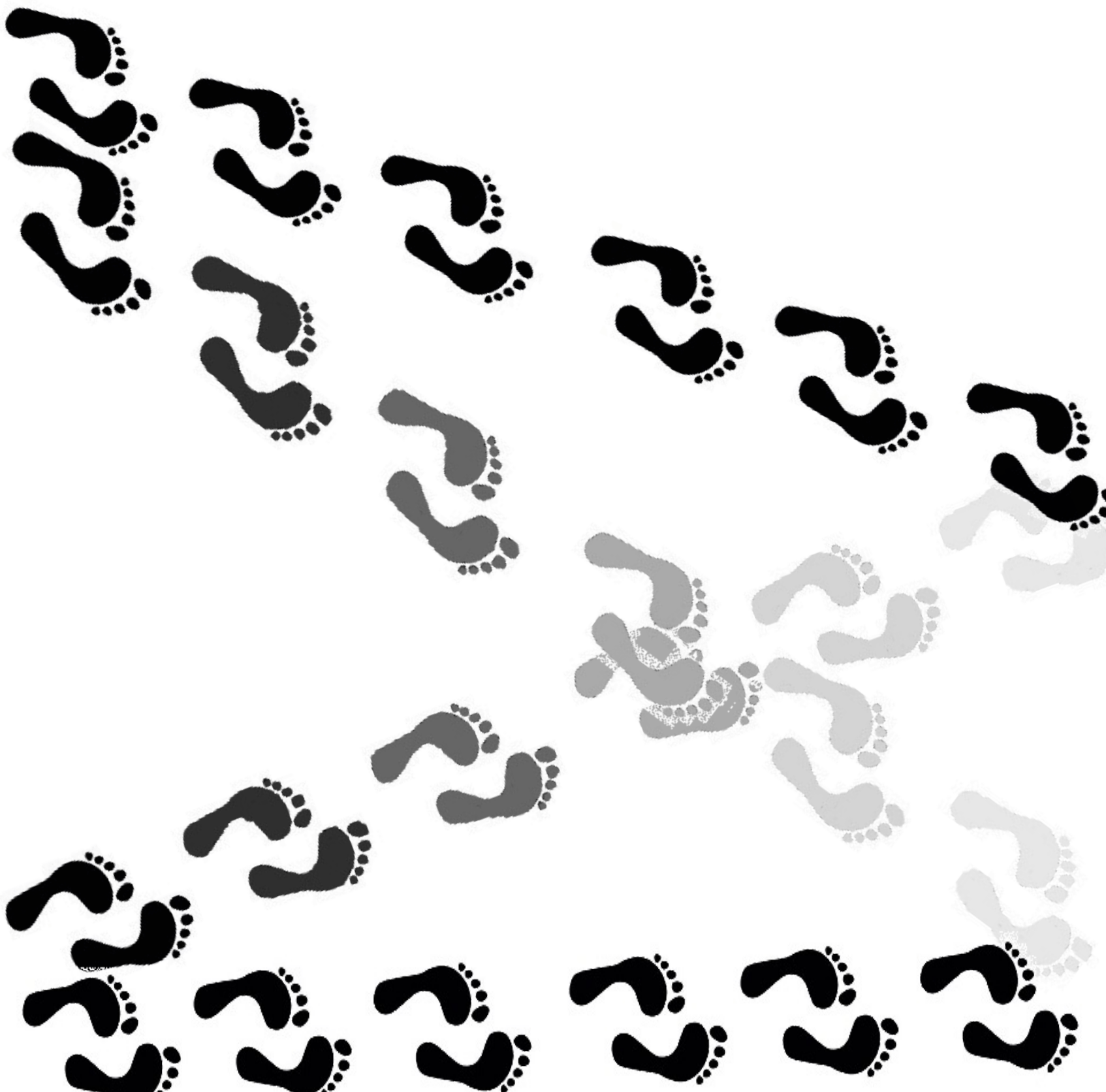
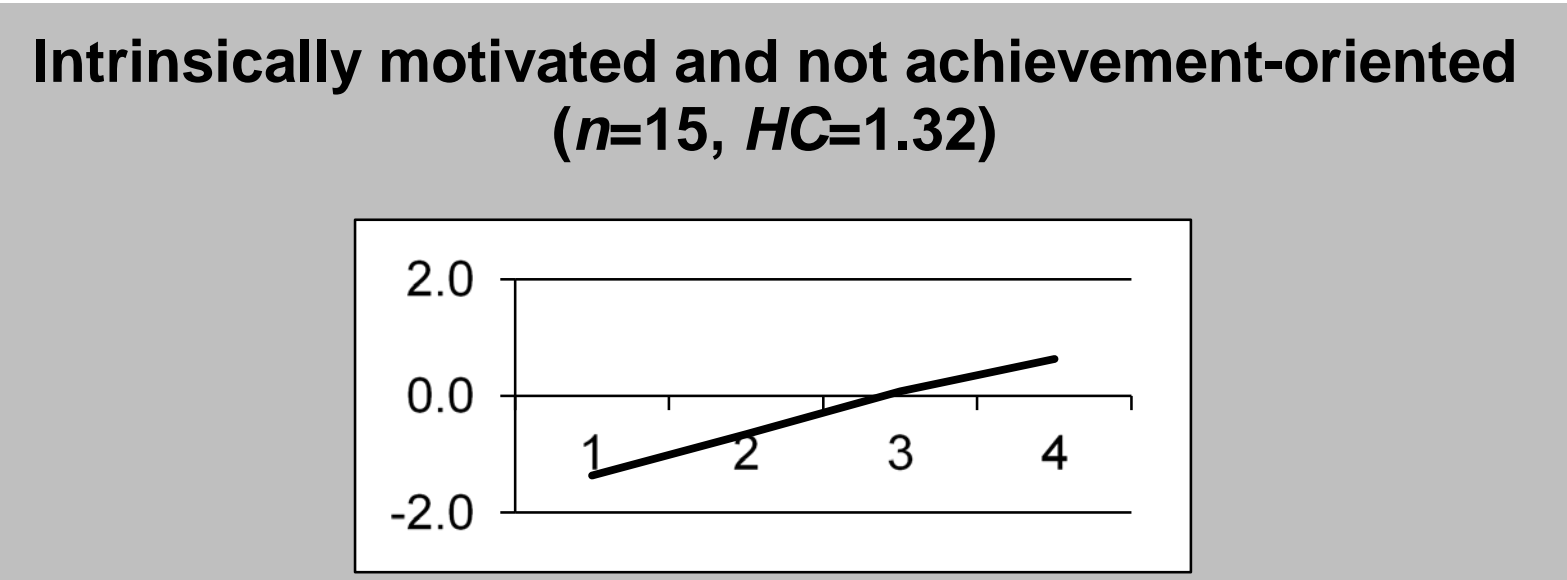
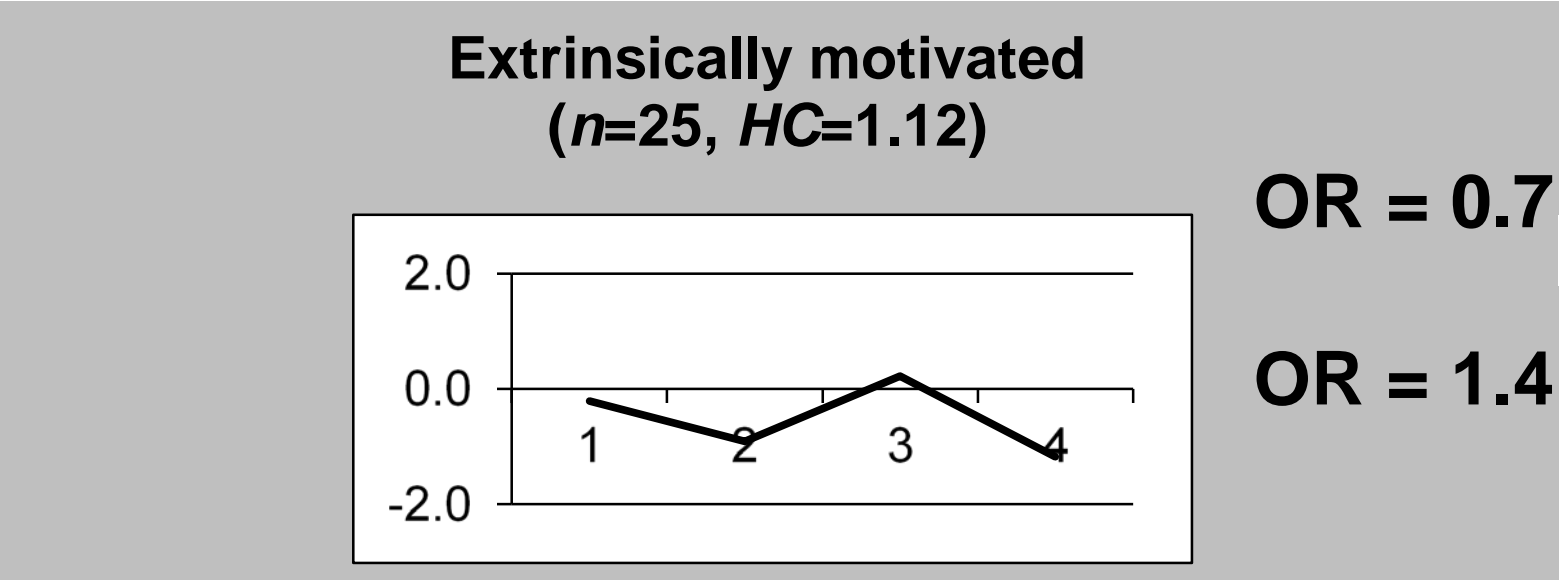
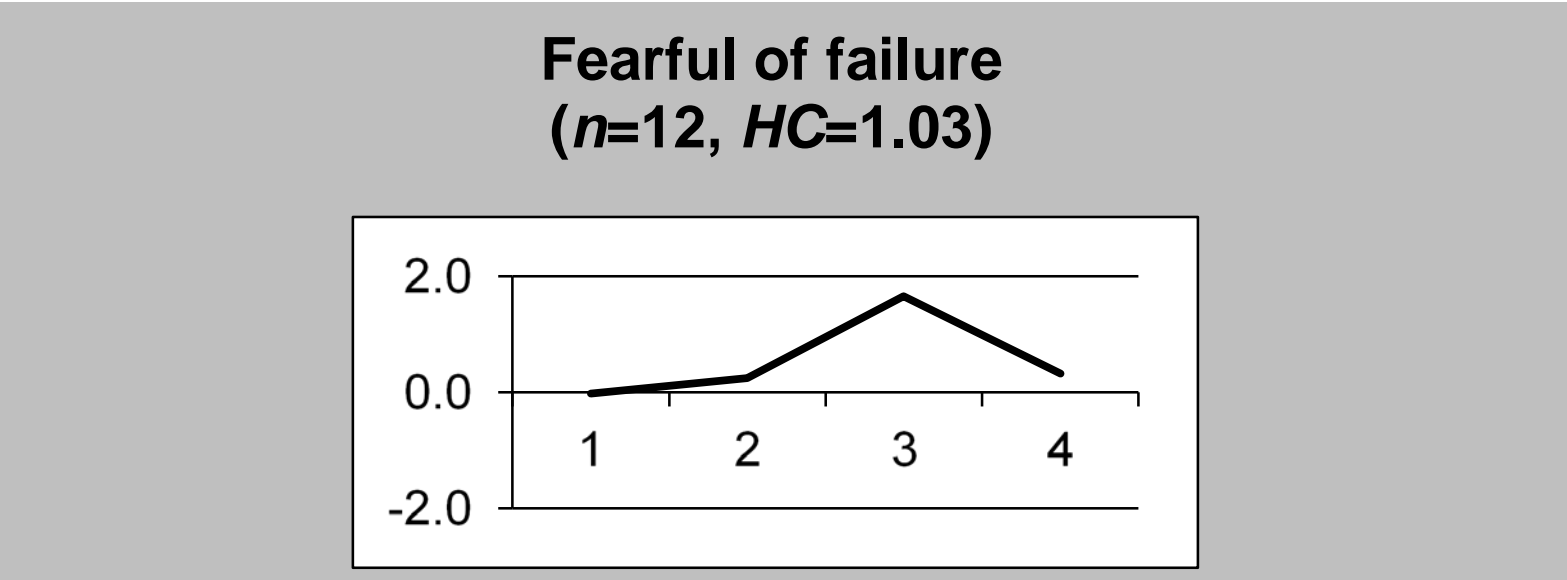
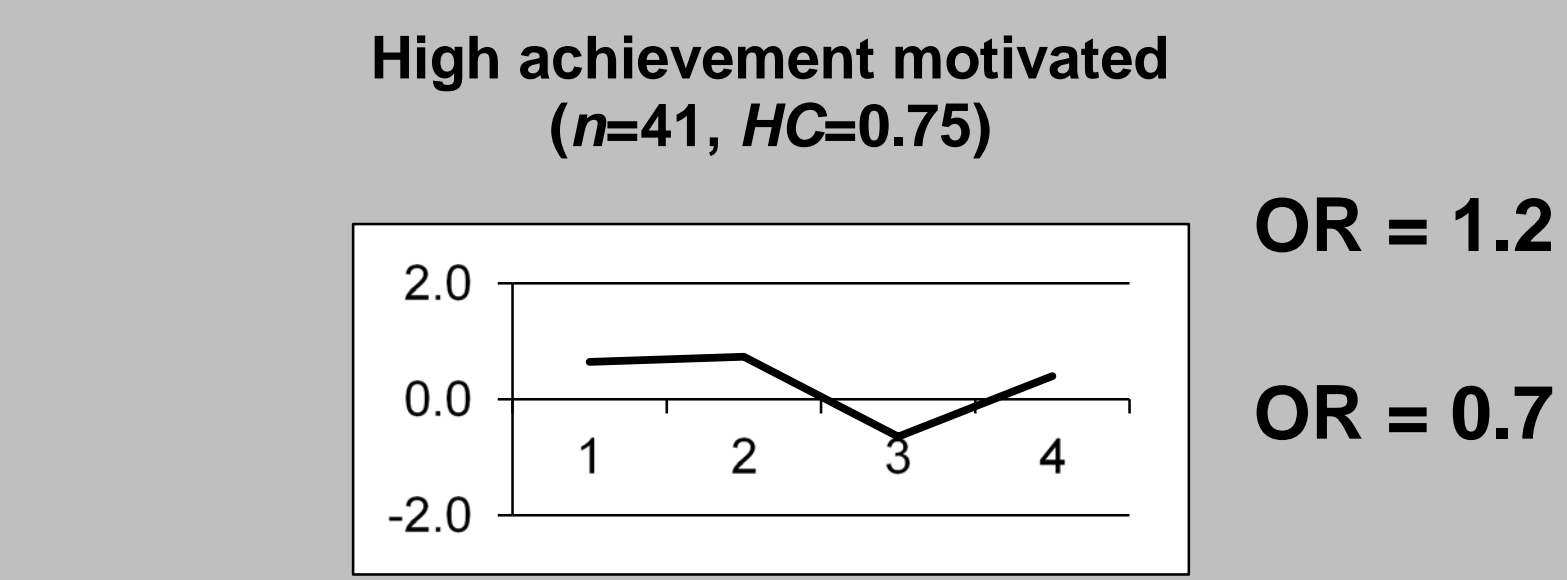
Methods

A sample of 95 young, male football talents ($M_{Age} = 12.26$, $SD = 0.29$) were questioned concerning their self-determination, HS and FF as the facets of their achievement motive, and their competitive orientation. Their athletic performance was assessed a year later by national youth team coaches, using a 2-step scale (1= low level of performance, 2= high level of performance). The clusters found (Ward, squared Euclidian distance) were examined in terms of the transition probabilities between the performance categories.

Results

Four clusters are identified (52.85 % explained variance). The “high achievement motivated” athletes are found to move into the group of high-performance players at a higher-than-random frequency (odds ratio = 1.2). “Extrinsically motivated” athletes, display a higher-than-random transition into the lower performance category (OR =1.4). No higher-than-random paths were observed among those “fearful of failure” and those “intrinsically motivated and not achievement-oriented”.

Motive Profiles (2011)



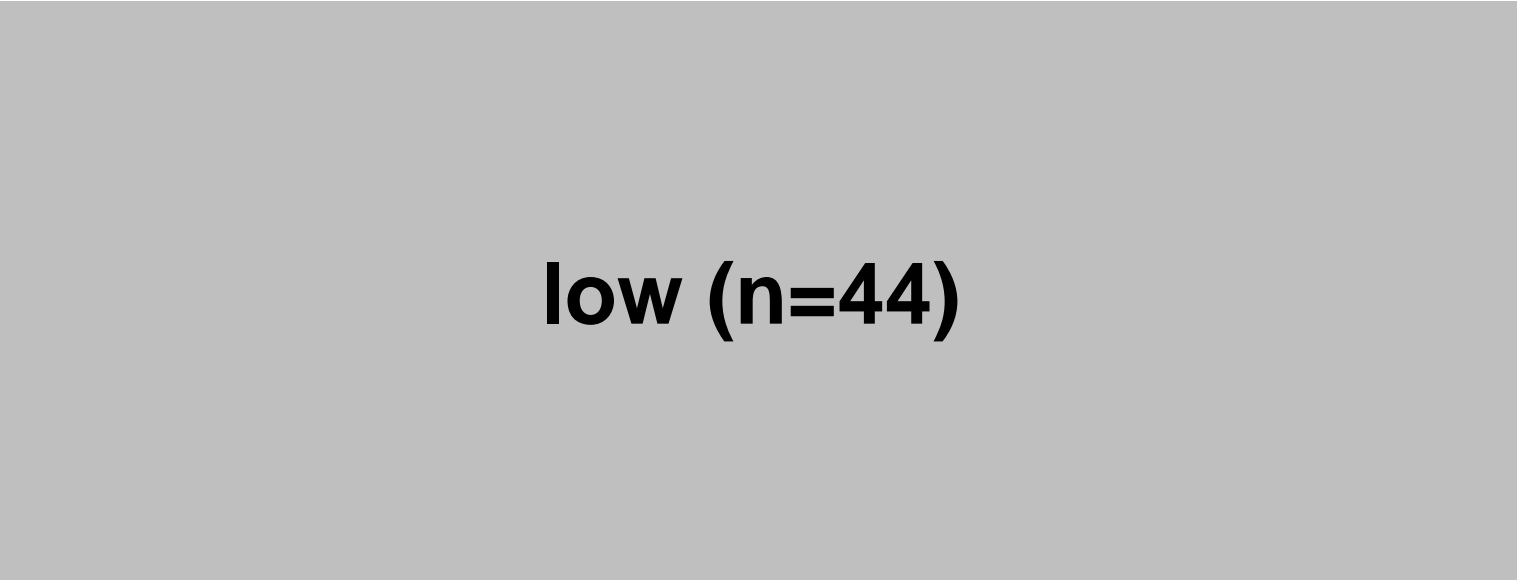
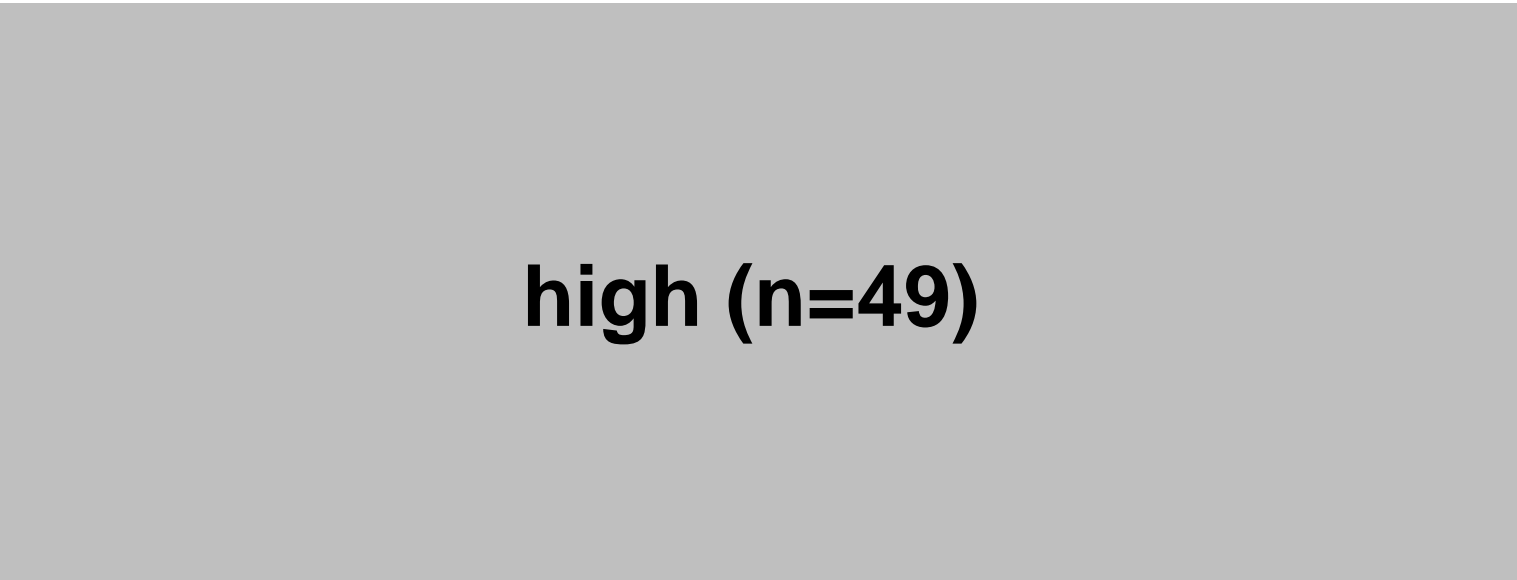
Operating factors:
1 = competitiveness
2 = hope for success
3 = fear of failure
4 = self-determination

HC = Homogeneity
Coefficient (average
squared Euclidean
distance within cluster)

Discussion

The results indicate the importance of specific sets of variables for the medium-term development of performance among young talents in competitive sports. Further longitudinal studies are needed in order to decide whether the patterns of variable can contribute to talent selection and promotion in the longer term too.

Performance Levels (2012)



sig. developmental type¹

sig. developmental anti-type¹

¹ The numbers given refer to the factor by which a particular path was more or less likely to be followed than would be expected



References

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Conroy, D. E., Elliot, A. J., & Coatsworth, J. D. (2007). Competence motivation in sport and exercise: The hierarchical model of achievement motivation and self-determination theory. In M. Hagger & N. Chatzis (Eds.), *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in exercise and sport* (pp. 181–192). Champaign: Human Kinetics.